provision for compulsory religious instruction. In February 1923, 659
however, a Bill submitted to a referendum by the Christian-Democratic party (Lutheran), making religious instruction free and compulsory, was adopted by 330,000 votes to 130,000.[1] In 1926 a Law on the Religious Communities was passed, disestablishing and disendowing all religious bodies, while permitting them full autonomy and freedom to carry on their spiritual tasks. Under the dictatorship, however, a new law of 1934 imposed a certain degree of State control over the churches. Their statutes were subject to confirmation by the Government, and the decisions of the Church Councils could be vetoed by the Minister of the Interior, while the President of the State might require the appointment of other or additional candidates at the elections of the heads of the churches. All priests and [793]
divines must be Estonian citizens, and services must be held in the language of the parishioners, except where ancient church languages were used. The churches were allowed their own courts, whose decisions might be provided with an executionary clause by the lay courts.

Latvia. Since the time of the Reformation, when the Baltic Barons 795
changed over from the Roman Catholic to the Lutheran faith, the 162
majority of the inhabitants have been Lutherans. The Province of Latgale, however, owing to its historic connexion with Poland, has remained Catholic to this day. During the period of Russian rule the Orthodox Church enjoyed a privileged position.

Complete religious liberty exists in Latvia to-day. The churches 659
are autonomous, but they receive small State subsidies, and clerical affairs are subject to the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior. In view of the large Catholic population in Latgale, the Government [648]
signed a Concordat with the Vatican on May 30, 1922,[2] recognizing the Catholic Church as a corporate body, and establishing an Archbishopric at Riga, with the stipulation that the Archbishop must be a Latvian citizen and his appointment subject to the Government's consent.

Lithuania. Owing to its long historical connexion with Poland, 795
Lithuania has remained almost entirely Roman Catholic to this day. 659
In the Constitution of 1922 the State recognized the equal right of all religious organizations to administer their affairs, to publish their doctrines, and to acquire property. Religious education was to be [794] ●
compulsory in schools other than those established for the children of undenominational parents, and was to be in accordance with the requirement of the religious organization to which the student belonged.

[1] The result of the plebiscite was a defeat for the Government, which had previously rejected the Bill; in accordance with the Constitution, therefore, the State Assembly was dissolved, and new elections were held.

[2] A Supplementary Convention was signed during M. Munters' recent visit to Rome in January 1938.

000 requirements of the religious organization to which the student belonged.

665 648 The clerical Christian-Democratic party in Lithuania, which was also a nationalist and agrarian group, has played a far more important part in political life than its Lutheran counterparts in Latvia and Estonia; indeed, it was the dominant partner in every Government during the parliamentary phase, except for the short-lived Populist-Socialist Cabinet of June–December 1926. In spite of this fact, relations with the Vatican were for a long time extremely acrimonious, largely as a result of the Concordat concluded in 1925 between Poland and the Vatican, whereby the latter recognized the Vilna district as a Polish diocese. Popular indignation at the failure of the Government to change this situation was exploited by the Opposition in the elections of 1926 to secure the defeat of the Christian-Democrats, who, however, supported the Voldemaras Government formed in the following December. A Concordat was eventually negotiated in September 1927, whereby the limits of the ecclesiastical province of [793] Lithuania were to coincide with the existing frontiers; bishops were ●[794] to be nominated by the Holy See, subject to the approval of the President of the Republic; although religious education was compulsory in all State schools, Catholic Churches might have their own schools, supported by the State.

659 648 In the autumn of 1930 there was a recrudescence of hostility when the Government suppressed the Catholic Youth Organization, on the ground that the Church was encouraging political propaganda against the Government, and arrested a number of Christian-Democratic leaders. An exchange of Notes between the Vatican and the Government, followed by a visit of the Papal-Legate, Mgr. Bartolini, to Rome in January 1931, failed to lead to a reconciliation, and in June Mgr. Bartolini was virtually turned out of the country. Relations improved somewhat after the appointment of Mgr. Faidutti as Papal Chargé d'Affaires in August; but up till now no general measure of agreement has been reached, and the Government has succeeded in getting the upper hand in its struggle with the Christian-Democratic party, which was suppressed in 1935. The new Constitution adopted in February 1938, which provides for the introduction of civil marriage and deprives the Church of its autonomy, has aroused considerable opposition in clerical circles.

4. Education[1]

872 Under the Russian régime primary education in the Estonian and Latvian Provinces reached a fairly high level; in 1886, 98 per cent.

[1] For statistics relating to the number and types of schools in the three countries, see footnotes on pp. 31, 34, and 38 above.

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Baltic Countries RBI

wars, and of the Third Partition of Poland, all three countries were ceded to Russia. At first the Czars governed rather benevolently, but by the middle of the nineteenth century the three had been absorbed into the "Northwest Territory"; and stern measures of Russification were resorted to. In Lithuania, for example, only Russian might be spoken. Monastic schools were closed. The Polish and Lithuanian languages were forbidden. Many thousands of persons were deported.

After World War I broke out, the three suffered by reason of the wavering fortunes of the belligerents. In 1918 they were the scene of sanguinary fighting between remnants of the German army, invading Bolshevik troops, and hastily formed armies of national liberation. The Poles also intervened. Finally, however, all three states were declared independent, and governments were formed. A period of uneasy tranquillity followed, but the predominatingly peasant population achieved a measure of prosperity. Then the Pact of August, 1939, between Stalin and Hitler and the subsequent erasure of Poland from the map of Europe inaugurated intense tribulation along the Baltic. Germans were evacuated from Latvia and Estonia. All three Republics were compelled to sign agreements with Russia permitting the establishment of military bases. Thousands fled, and countless other thousands were deported. Next came the aftermath of the Nazi declaration of war on Russia. In a very short time Hitler had the Baltic coasts under his heel, and the expulsion and liquidation of Jews began. Finally the German armies retreated, the Russians entered, and the status of the "Northwest Territory" was restored.

Elections followed, and as a matter of course pro-Communist governments were established. It should be noted that only in Estonia had a native minority of any size favored the Communist cause. Moreover, the religious affiliations of the

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Baltic Countries RBI

populations were deeply rooted in tradition. Estonia, with a prewar population of 1,250,000, had about 900,000 Lutherans and approximately 215,000 Greek Orthodox. There was only a small group of Roman Catholics. Lithuania, on the other hand, with 3,000,000, was predominatingly Roman Catholic. Minorities of Lutherans, Jews, and Greek Orthodox constituted about one-fifth of the population. More than half of the population of Latvia belonged to the Lutheran Church, but there were substantial Catholic and Greek Orthodox minorities. The organizational activities of the Churches were varied and rich. In Lithuania, for example, with two archdioceses and four dioceses, more than 800,000 persons were enrolled in various lay organizations. The largest daily newspaper was in Catholic hands, and the total circulation achieved by the religious press was impressive. In Latvia likewise, publications under religious auspices numbered more than a fifth of those printed.

The first Communist occupation, dating from June 15, 1940, engulfed all three nations in tragedy. The Russians decreed that every organization established before their seizure of control "jeopardized public security," and religious institutions and organizations were suppressed. Their property was confiscated, and they were forbidden to maintain any contact with the outside world. Religious instruction was curtailed drastically, the clergy being called upon to sign a pledge that they would desist from teaching religion either in public or in private. Waves of Communist propaganda, much of it directed against religion, passed over the country, burying every attempt at counteraction. Within a year the Russians had destroyed every overt vestige of the autonomous culture which these small countries had fostered during the limited time of their independence.

It was done ruthlessly, brutally, barbarously. More than